



## SIKKIM UNIVERSITY

### MINUTES OF 12<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD AT ICSSR BHAWAN NEW DELHI ON 08 NOVEMBER 2014

#### Members present

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| 1. Professor T. B. Subba, Vice-Chancellor         | CHAIRMAN        |
| 2. Shri Yogendra Tripathi [Visitor's nominee]     | MEMBER          |
| 3. Shri. Sukbhir Singh Sandhu [Visitor's nominee] | MEMBER          |
| 4. Dr. K.P. Singh [Visitor's nominee]             | MEMBER          |
| 5. Shri Sonam Wangdi [EC's nominee]               | MEMBER          |
| 6. Shri M. G. Kiran [EC's nominee]                | MEMBER          |
| 7. Shri T. K. Kaul, Registrar                     | SPECIAL INVITEE |
| 8. Shri D. Kanunjna, Adviser (Finance)            | SECRETARY       |

Shri. Fazal Mahmood, Deputy Secretary (Finance), MHRD represented Shri. Yogendra Tripathi [Visitor's nominee] MEMBER.

Shri. Surat Singh, Deputy Secretary (CU & L), MHRD represented Shri. Sukbhir Singh Sandhu [Visitor's nominee] MEMBER

Shri C. Talukdar, Deputy Registrar (Finance) assisted the Committee.

Quorum of the meeting having been attained, the Chairman called the meeting to order. The Committee recorded its appreciation of Shri. A K Singh, former Joint Secretary (CU &L), MHRD and Dr. (Mrs) Renu Batra, Joint Secretary, UGC for their valuable contribution to the University through this Committee. The Committee also welcomed Shri. Sukbhir Singh Sandhu, Joint Secretary (CU & L) and Dr. K P Singh, Joint Secretary (CU), UGC nominated by the Visitor to the Committee as distinguished members.

The Committee then proceeded with the agenda items one by one.

<b>FC:12:01</b>	<b>Confirmation of the Minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of Finance Committee held on 07.12.2013</b>
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**Agenda**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 07.12.2013 was placed for confirmation of the Committee.

**Minute**

**It was reported that the minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 07.12.2013 were circulated among the members on 16.12.2013. There being no comments from the members, the Committee confirmed the same.**

<b>FC:12:02</b>	<b>Action Taken Report on the Minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of Finance Committee held on 07.12.2013</b>
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**Agenda**

The Report on Action Taken on the minutes of the meeting held on 07.12.2013 was placed before the Committee for its consideration..

**Minute**

**Para-wise details of action taken by the University on the decisions taken in the previous meeting were reported. The Committee noted the same.**

<b>FC:12:03</b>	<b>UGC Centre for Endangered Languages in Sikkim University</b>
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**Agenda**

The UGC vide its letter dated 03.04.2014 communicated its approval for establishment of Centre for Endangered Languages (CEL). Three Central Universities, viz, Tezpur University, Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar and Sikkim University, Gangtok are to work in cluster format, with Tezpur University as the lead cluster, to develop endangered languages of the region. Sikkim University will work for languages of Sikkim and North Bengal and has been allocated Rs. 1.80 crore for first three years' of activity of the CEL.

The Academic Council and the Executive Council of the University have approved the setting up of the Centre of Endangered Languages and appointed Dr. Samar Sinha, Assistant Professor, Department of Nepali as its Coordinator.

**Minute**

**The Committee noted the establishment of the Centre.**

<b>FC:12:04</b>	<b>Maulana Azad Centre in collaboration with MAKAIAS</b>
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**Agenda**

The University entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on 17.12.2013 with Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Kolkata (MAKAIAS) for academic and research co-operation for initial period of five years, extendable on mutual consent. The MoU provides for setting up a Maulana Azad Centre for Research on North-East India in Sikkim University. The objective of the centre would be to stimulate and provide research opportunity to Post-Graduate, M Phil and PhD students as well as other senior researchers, in increasing the effectiveness in social science research in the North-East and its neighbourhoods by organizing seminars, conferences and academic workshops on matters of topical interest, publish books, monographs etc. The centre will function as a nodal Centre for co-ordinating social sciences research mainly on North-East across the disciplines in the State of Sikkim and its neighbourhoods. The MAKAIAS will channelize necessary funds for running the activities of the Centre in accordance with requirement projected by the University and approved by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Separate account of the transactions relating to the Centre will be maintained. Dr. Manish, Associate Professor & Head, Department of International Relations is appointed as its Coordinator.

**Minute**

**The Committee noted the establishment of the Centre.**

<b>FC:12:05</b>	<b>Report on Utilization of Grants for Q.E. September, 2014</b>
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**Agenda**

As per UGC Letter No. F.1-1/2012 (CU) dated 30<sup>th</sup> December 2012 the Certificates of Utilization furnished to it are to be placed before the Finance Committee in its next meeting for information. Accordingly, the returns for the Quarter ended September 2014 was submitted for information of Members.

The University received Rs. 96.73 crores out of 12<sup>th</sup> Plan allocation (including Rs. 5 crore for 11<sup>th</sup> Plan committed liabilities) under the General Development assistance and utilized Rs. 87.76 crores till 30.09.2014. Unspent balance including interest of Rs. 6.18 crore is Rs. 15.15 crore. UGC has been requested to release further installment of grant immediately.

**Minute**

**Progress in utilization of grants received by the University was noted by the Committee.**

<b>FC:12:06</b>	<b>Annual Accounts 2013-14</b>
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**Agenda**

Annual Accounts of the University for the Year 2013-14 is placed on the table. Audit of these accounts by the statutory auditors was conducted from 08/07/2014 to 09/08/2014. It was reported that the SAR of the C&AG of India, due to be received from the office of the A.G. (Audit) Sikkim by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014 was still awaited. The final SAR was expected to be issued any day now and same could be circulated to the members forthwith.

Members were also informed that the meeting of the Executive Council, where the Annual audited Accounts and Annual Report of the University would be placed for approval before forwarding them to the MHRD by the stipulated date (1<sup>st</sup> December 2014), has been convened on 15 November 2014.

An overview of the Annual Accounts 2013-14 along with explanatory memorandum was placed before the Committee

**Minute**

**The Committee approved the Annual Accounts 2013-14 and directed that the final SAR may be circulated among the members as and when received from the Statutory Auditors.**

<b>FC:12:07</b>	<b>Revised Estimates 2014-15 &amp; Budget Estimates 2015-16</b>
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**Agenda**

Allocation under General Development assistance of 12<sup>th</sup> Plan for Sikkim University has been approved for Rs. 300 crores. The amount does not include fund required for raising the campus at Yangang, for which tentative allocation of Rs. 785 crore has been projected to the UGC with the approval of the Finance Committee.

UGC has released Rs. 9172.50 lakhs out of 12<sup>th</sup> Plan allocation, of which Rs. 8775.97 lakh has been utilized (95.68%) till 30.09.2014. The Committee was informed that a further grant of Rs. 10 crores was received on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2014. Based on the minimum requirement, revised estimates for 2014-15 (Rs. 48.72 crore) and Budget Estimates for 2015-16 (Rs. 69.74 crore) have been drawn.

Detailed head-wise proposal was submitted for consideration of approval of the Committee.

**Minute**

**The Committee approved the Revised Estimates 2014-15 & Budget Estimates 2015-16**

<b>FC:12:08</b>	<b>Regulations for the meetings of Finance Committee</b>
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**Agenda**

In terms of Section 31 read with statute 47 of the SU Act 2007, the University has drafted regulations for the conduct of the meetings of the Finance Committee. These are in line with the regulations for the meetings of the Academic Council and the Executive Council which have already been approved. A copy of the regulations was placed for kind consideration and approval of the Committee.

**Minute**

**The Regulations were approved by the Committee**

<b>FC:12:09</b>	<b>Internal Audit Report for 2013-14</b>
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**Agenda**

M/s Sushil Das & Associates, Chartered Accountants were appointed as the Internal Auditors for the year 2013-14. The University is yet to fill the sanctioned post of Internal Audit Officer. Internal audit was conducted in a concurrent manner by the firm. The firm submitted the internal audit report to the University on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2014. A copy of the report was placed for consideration and approval of the Committee.

**Minute**

**The Committee approved the Internal Audit Report for 2013-14**

<b>FC:12:10</b>	<b>Fund to promote interdisciplinary research</b>
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**Agenda**

In order to encourage young faculty members to conduct high end and socially relevant interdisciplinary research on the Eastern Himalayas in general and Sikkim in particular, the Executive Council advised the University to create a corpus Fund namely 'Sikkim University Research Support Fund'. The fund was created out of accumulations of overhead charges from several externally funded projects and interest thereon, which amounted to Rs.17.18 lakh. The Fund will remain in perpetuity and only the amount of interest generated out of its investment will be utilized. The Deans' Committee of the University has worked out the guidelines for proper utilization of the corpus fund and suggested that all future overhead grants receivable by the university from different projects be transferred to this Fund. In its meeting held on 31.07.2014, the Committee further proposed that the University may

consider transferring Rs. 10 lakhs every year from its internally generated resources by way of augmentation of the corpus fund. Utilization of proceeds of the fund will be separately reported to the Finance Committee along with annual accounts every year.

In order to ensure that interest accrued is substantial to encourage good interdisciplinary research by young faculty members of the university, the proposal was submitted for approval.

Minute

**The committee appreciated the initiatives of the University and directed that the matter may be referred to UGC for administrative approval.**

<b>FC:12:11</b>	<b>Additional HRA in lieu of rent free unfurnished accommodation to Central Government employees posted in Sikkim</b>	<b><u>Agenda</u></b> Rent of
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private houses let out for hiring is abnormally high in Gangtok. Since the University is yet to build housing infrastructure, employees are therefore required to pay rent much higher than what they receive by way of normal HRA. The matter has been a concern to the University authorities, as this is found to deter prospective teachers and other employees from joining the University. In order to mitigate the hardship, the University was directed by the Executive Council to pay fixed sum by way of rental support to such employees till such time as the University shifts to its own campus where full housing facility will be provided.

Government of India, Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) in its order dated 4<sup>th</sup> May 1988 extended to all central government employees posted in Sikkim the benefit of rent free unfurnished accommodation or HRA in lieu thereof at the rate of 7½ % of basic pay. The decision was taken in consultation with staff side of National Council of Joint Consultative Machinery. The decision was reiterated in subsequent orders dated 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2005 and 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2014 of the Ministry of Finance. Accordingly, all employees working in the office of the Accountant General, Sikkim are provided rent free unfurnished accommodation.

During a recent communication with the office of the Accountant General the issue came up for discussion. Subsequently, the Vice-Chancellor constituted a committee headed by Shri Sonam Wangdi, Member of Executive Council and Finance Committee, with the Accountant General, Sikkim and Adviser (Finance) of the University as members, to examine the matter in all its bearing. Recommendations of the Committee made on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014 were as under:

1. Employees of Sikkim University whose pay and allowances are governed by Central Government rules are entitled to rent free unfurnished accommodation or HRA at 7½ % of pay in lieu thereof. As the University has not yet built any housing infrastructure, the employees ought to be covered under this benefit.

2. Since these allowances are conditional on incurring expenses on house rent, employees claiming to avail of the benefit may furnish a declaration with regard to their rental liability supported by proper rent receipt or agreement of tenancy. The claim may be accepted by an executive order to the extent admissible, subject to a maximum of 7½ % of pay in addition to normal HRA of 10%.
3. These orders should be made prospective, following the date of adoption of these orders by the Executive Council.
4. Rental subsidy, being extended to some of the employees now, should be withdrawn from the date of availing of this subsidy or termination of the present contract whichever is earlier.
5. Licence fee, being realized from employees, may be discontinued with effect from the date of adoption by the Executive Council.

Minute

**The proposal was accepted in principle. The extension of the extant GOI order to the University will be examined by the MHRD for which the University should make a reference. Till such time, the existing provisions should prevail.**

FC:12:12	Purchase of vehicles
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Agenda

Sikkim University purchased a vehicle for official use of the Vice-Chancellor in October 2007. Subsequently, permission was given to all new Central Universities as per UGC Letter No. F.24-36/2009 (CU) dt. 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2009 to purchase three vehicles for official use of Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and Finance Officer. However, the University deferred purchase of two vehicles due to very limited activity at that time. Now, the situation has changed as the University is scattered in 21 hired buildings across 15 km stretch. There is also requirement of regular visits to campus site at Yangang. Hiring charges of private vehicles is abnormally high in Sikkim. It is also very difficult to find vehicles with commercial license for hire. The cost-benefit analysis also suggested that owning the vehicles would be preferable to hiring in Gangtok. In order to ensure functional efficiency, it is imperative that the University acquires the two vehicles, for which permission, as one time dispensation, already exists, during the current financial year.

Minute

**The members agreed with the justification provided by the university. However in view of the latest order of Ministry of Finance dated 29.10.2014, the university was asked to once again refer the matter to the MHRD through UGC with all previous references for an expeditious decisions in the matter.**

<b>FC:12:13</b>	<b>Ambulance service at the Health Centre</b>
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rsity has urgent need of an ambulance for its Health Centre, as students in various hostels located in isolated areas of Gangtok, regularly need emergent health care in odd hours and often require shifting to hospitals. Private ambulance service does not exist in Gangtok. Extreme difficulties are therefore faced in dealing with emergencies when immediate hospitalization is called for. Service of an ambulance will also be essential for transfer of patients to hospitals when the University moves to its own campus.

**Minute**

**The proposal was accepted in principle. The University may write to the UGC for administrative approval.**

<b>FC:12:14</b>	<b>Sikkim University campus at Yangang</b>
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**Agenda**

Campus of Sikkim University is being set up at Yangang, a small town 56 kilometers southwest of Gangtok, on a hilly terrain measuring about 300 acres. Major part of the land (about 88%) has already been released by the Government of Sikkim and the remaining land is expected to be handed over shortly. The issue of encumbrance on a small area of the land has not been fully resolved yet. The University has taken up construction of boundary walls including retaining walls around a perimeter of over six kilometers. The work has been assigned to the state PWD as a deposit work valued approximately at Rs. 12.48 crore. More than 35% of the work has been completed.

The University has also finalized selection of a reputed firm for rendering all architectural services to the building project. The task of preparing the detailed project report (DPR) will be taken up immediately.

The Building Committee set up as per guidelines of the UGC, meets regularly. Recommendations made in its meeting dated 18.02.2014 & 01.11.2014 were submitted for approval of the Finance Committee.

**Minute**

**The members noted the developments with regard to building of Sikkim University campus and desired early completion of the campus to avoid heavy**



**rental liability and other difficulties presently faced by the University in the rented buildings.**

There being no other matter for discussion, the meeting ended with thanks from and to the Chair.

**Sd/-**  
**[Shri D. Kanunjna]**  
**Secretary**  
**08.11.2014**

**Sd/-**  
**[Prof. T. B. Subba]**  
**Chairman**  
**08.11.2014**